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UNCLAS QUITO 002022

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, WHA, WHA/AND, WHA/PDA
DIRONDCP FOR PA
EMBASSIES FOR PAO/IO

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: VENEZUELA; PAT ROBERTSON'S
STATEMENT

1. . "Pact with Venezuela - Let's Get Going," a
column (08/29) in Guayaquil's conservative "El
Telegrafo" (circ. 8,000)

"The fiscal situation has been deteriorating for
quite some time now. The fundamental cause is the
huge amount of money allotted in the budget for the
so called service of the public debt. . . . What
alternative sources for financing are available? . .
.

". . . The option offered by Venezuela must be taken
seriously, because it is a good opportunity. Despite
its obvious benefits, no doubt the unconditional
supporters of neoliberalism will put forward the
'argument' that 'Chavez is dangerous'. . .

"No conditions have been placed on this - unlike the
extremely harsh [conditions] constantly imposed on us
by the IMF, World Bank, and others. We should demand
that negotiations with Venezuela go forward . and
show the spirit of solidarity amongst the community
of South American nations that everyone should
support."

2. "Sowing Violence," a column (08/27) by Rene Mauge
in Quito's leading centrist "El Comercio" (circ.
70,000)

Quote: "It was not a simple 'statement from a
private citizen', as President Bush's spokesmen have
said, rather it was a declaration from a preacher who
has wide popularity in the U.S. and is a close friend
of the President and Chief of the Pentagon. . . .

"There is no doubt that the biggest concern for U.S.
foreign policy is not so much Chavez, as the
possibility of a unified South American continent
seeking to defend its own interests and the promotion
of sustainable development that will benefit its
people."

JEWELL